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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN UNLIKELY TO SUPPORT RUSSIAN FUEL BANK  
PROPOSAL AT IAEA MEETING

REF: SECSTATE 117710

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b) (d)

¶1. (C) PolOff delivered reftel request for support for the Russian Fuel Bank proposal at the November International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board meeting to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Disarmament Director Kamran Akhtar on November 17. Akhtar said that Pakistan believed the Russian proposal to be discriminatory and therefore would not support it at the Board meeting. The inclusion of Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) language referring to nuclear weapon states, non-nuclear weapon states, and comprehensive safeguards creates problems for Pakistan, he said. Pakistan instead prefers an approach, similar to the Nuclear Threat Initiative proposal, that does not discriminate based on NPT status.

¶2. (C) Akhtar said Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) states are having a philosophical debate about the necessity of establishing nuclear fuel banks and other multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. On an individual basis, Akhtar stated, Pakistan could support fuel banks, provided they do not discriminate against non-NPT states or states without comprehensive safeguards agreements. While he thought it unlikely the NAM would object to any proposal that is consistent with the IAEA Statute, he believes support from the NAM for the Russian proposal is unlikely. "Even if the NAM countries abstain," he said, "what kind of message does that send?" A vote is premature at this point and it would be better if the Board first adopted parameters on access to nuclear fuel banks before considering individual proposals, he argued.

¶3. (C) Akhtar said the GOP understands U.S. support for an India-style civil nuclear cooperation agreement for Pakistan is unlikely, but on a bilateral basis Pakistan would like to discuss U.S. assistance in opening the door in the IAEA context for safeguarded civilian nuclear cooperation, perhaps along the lines of a build-own-operate model and participation in a fuel services scheme. Under these circumstances, Pakistan would consider breaking with the NAM and supporting fuel bank proposals, he said.

¶4. (C) Comment: Despite several years of hearing a consistent USG message of no civil nuclear cooperation, the GOP continues to hold out hope for a loophole and has thus set its sights on an IAEA multilateral fuel services model that would permit Pakistani participation. The GOP seems to believe the NAM will continue to push for a nondiscriminatory fuel bank model as a first step, a position Pakistan is quite

comfortable with. Until the USG is willing to consider discussing with the GOP how Pakistan might leverage the IAEA discussions to gain civil nuclear cooperation, GOP support for fuel bank proposals at the IAEA seems unlikely. End comment.  
PATTERSON